

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2056

To establish United States Government policy regarding the necessity of requiring the full withdrawal of all Syrian military, security, intelligence and proxy forces from Lebanon and the restoration of Lebanon's independence.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 8, 1999

Mr. FORBES introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Banking and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish United States Government policy regarding the necessity of requiring the full withdrawal of all Syrian military, security, intelligence and proxy forces from Lebanon and the restoration of Lebanon's independence.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Lebanon Independence
5 Restoration Act of 1999”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 The Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) The people of Lebanon have a rich, proud,
4 and honorable history dating from biblical times to
5 the present, and Lebanon has been a free and demo-
6 cratic nation for much of its modern history.

7 (2) Lebanon and the United States have en-
8 joyed a history of friendship and cooperation which
9 has been witnessed by the immigration of millions of
10 Lebanese to the United States where they and their
11 descendants have contributed greatly to the fabric of
12 American life.

13 (3) Lebanon witnessed foreign incursions and
14 occupations during its 15-year civil war. Although
15 that war ended in 1990, non-Lebanese forces still
16 control much of the country. These forces include an
17 Israeli force that controls a 9-mile wide security
18 zone in Lebanon contiguous with Israel's northern
19 border, and approximately 30,000 Syrian troops,
20 several armed Palestinian factions, and other ter-
21 rorist groups that control the remainder of the coun-
22 try.

23 (4) There is a crucial distinction between the
24 presence of Syrian and Israeli military forces in Leb-
25 anon. Israel exercises no control over the Govern-
26 ment of Lebanon and in 1998 offered to withdraw

1 unilaterally from the security zone in return for se-
2 curity guarantees, whereas Syria has never recog-
3 nized Lebanon's independence, or exchanged ambas-
4 sadors with Lebanon, and effectively dictates the
5 major policies and actions of the Government of
6 Lebanon.

7 (5) Various Lebanese factions signed a peace
8 settlement in Taif, Saudi Arabia, in 1989 as a step
9 toward ending the civil war. This accord provided for
10 the phased redeployment and withdrawal of Syrian
11 forces from Lebanon beginning in 1992.

12 (6) The Government of Syria has refused to
13 carry out any redeployment as envisioned by the
14 Taif Accord. Syrian domination over Lebanese poli-
15 tics and political leaders is at the root of the Leba-
16 nese Government's failure to press Syria for a with-
17 drawal of Syria's occupying forces.

18 (7) In addition to its armed forces, Syria main-
19 tains a massive intelligence service presence in Leb-
20 anon to enforce its control over the Lebanese people.

21 (8) Syrian domination is so pervasive that Leb-
22 anon has effectively become a Syrian satellite state.
23 This relationship with Syria does not reflect the will
24 of the majority of the Lebanese public. Moreover,
25 Syria has sought to change Lebanon's demographic

1 balance by the population transfer of as many as
2 1,000,000 Syrian laborers to Lebanon.

3 (9) Syrian domination has prevented Lebanon
4 from developing direct contacts with Israel and par-
5 ticipating in the multilateral track of the Middle
6 East peace process.

7 (10) Syrian domination has been associated
8 with a deterioration in Lebanon's human rights situ-
9 ation. Syria has engineered Lebanese election results
10 to its liking, Syrian intelligence units have been im-
11 plicated in the disappearance of Lebanese citizens,
12 and the Syrian-controlled Lebanese Parliament has
13 imposed curbs on Lebanon's media, once the freest
14 in the Arab world.

15 (11) Syrian domination has failed to curtail
16 international narcotics traffickers or terrorist
17 groups, including Hizballah and the Kurdish Work-
18 ers Party, that operate in Lebanon under Syrian
19 control.

20 (12) Syrian domination has prevented the Leb-
21 anese Army from entering southern Lebanon to re-
22 store order and stability in that region. Con-
23 sequently, southern Lebanon has been a staging
24 area for military provocations against Israel by ter-
25 rorist groups supported by Syria and Iran.

1 (13) The United States Congress is concerned
2 about the potential for a miscalculation between
3 Israel and Syria that could inadvertently lead to
4 large-scale hostilities, especially in southern Leb-
5 anon. In this regard the Congress views with grave
6 concern Syria's acquisition of weapons of mass de-
7 struction, especially chemical and biological weapons
8 and missile delivery systems. Syrian surface-to-sur-
9 face missiles can reach major urban centers in
10 Israel, Turkey, and Jordan.

11 (14) The United States Congress has expressed
12 itself repeatedly in resolutions that insist that Syria
13 make good on its commitments to withdraw its mili-
14 tary and security forces from Lebanon.

15 (15) It is not in the interest of the United
16 States that freedom and democracy depart irrevers-
17 ibly from Lebanon. Lebanon has a constructive role
18 to play in the search for Middle East peace. It can
19 only do so when it is free, sovereign, and governed
20 by a truly representative government.

21 (16) The withdrawal of Syrian and other for-
22 eign forces from Lebanon would not only promote
23 regional stability, but also would create the nec-
24 essary conditions for the restoration of Lebanon's
25 independence, freedom, and democracy. Truly free

1 elections are not possible with the presence of for-
2 eign military and security forces and terrorist
3 groups in Lebanon.

4 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

5 The Congress calls for the following:

6 (1) A complete, immediate, and unconditional
7 withdrawal of all Syrian military, intelligence, and
8 security forces and their proxies and all Palestinian
9 and other terrorist forces from Lebanon, to be fol-
10 lowed by the eventual withdrawal of Israeli forces.

11 (2) Following the withdrawals described in
12 paragraph (1) and restoration of a freely elected,
13 democratic government in Lebanon, the deployment
14 of the Lebanese Army to southern Lebanon to re-
15 store order and stability in that region, and for dis-
16 banding all armed groups in Lebanon with the ex-
17 ception of the legitimate national armed forces.

18 (3) At the same time as the deployment de-
19 scribed in paragraph (2), the assurance by the Gov-
20 ernment of Lebanon for the safety and well-being of
21 all members of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) and
22 their families.

1 **SEC. 4. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS RELATING TO FUTURE**
2 **PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SYRIA AND**
3 **ISRAEL.**

4 It is the sense of the Congress that the United States
5 should not ratify or in any other way affirm, support, rec-
6 ognize, or participate in any peace agreement between
7 Syria and Israel that does not provide for the full and
8 verifiable withdrawal of Syrian military, intelligence, and
9 security forces and their proxies from Lebanon.

10 **SEC. 5. WITHDRAWAL OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREAT-**
11 **MENT FOR IMPORTS FROM SYRIA AND LEB-**
12 **ANON.**

13 (a) WITHDRAWAL.—Notwithstanding any other pro-
14 vision of law (except subsection (b)), nondiscriminatory
15 treatment (most-favored-nation treatment) shall not apply
16 with respect to any goods that—

17 (1) are the product of Syria or Lebanon; and
18 (2) are entered into the customs territory of the
19 United States on or after the 15th day after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act.

21 (b) RESTORATION OF NONDISCRIMINATORY TREAT-
22 MENT.—The President may restore nondiscriminatory
23 treatment to goods that—

24 (1) are the product of Lebanon beginning 30
25 days after the President certifies to the Congress
26 that Syrian military, security, and intelligence forces

1 and their proxies in Lebanon have been completely
2 withdrawn from Lebanon and that the Government
3 of Lebanon is certified to have been freely elected
4 and wholly democratic in nature; and

5 (2) are the product of Syria beginning 30 days
6 after the President certifies to the Congress that the
7 requirements described in paragraph (1) have been
8 met and that the Government of Syria is certified to
9 have been freely elected and wholly democratic in
10 nature.

11 **SEC. 6. PROHIBITION ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA**
12 **AND LEBANON.**

13 (a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
14 sion of law, economic assistance may not be provided to
15 Syria or Lebanon.

16 (b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply—

17 (1) with respect to Lebanon beginning 30 days
18 after the President certifies to the Congress that
19 Syrian military, security, and intelligence forces and
20 their proxies in Lebanon have been completely with-
21 drawn from Lebanon and that the Government of
22 Lebanon is certified to have been freely elected and
23 wholly democratic in nature; and

24 (2) with respect to Syria beginning 30 days
25 after the President certifies to the Congress that the

1 requirements described in paragraph (1) have been
2 met and that the Government of Syria is certified to
3 have been freely elected and wholly democratic in
4 nature.

5 (c) ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.—In this section, the
6 term “economic assistance” means any assistance under
7 part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C.
8 2151 et seq.) or any related assistance under any other
9 provision of law.

10 **SEC. 7. PROHIBITION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE**
11 **GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON.**

12 (a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
13 sion of law, military assistance may not be provided to
14 the Government of Lebanon.

15 (b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply be-
16 ginning 30 days after the President certifies to the Con-
17 gress that Syrian military, security, and intelligence forces
18 and their proxies in Lebanon have been completely with-
19 drawn from Lebanon and the Government of Lebanon is
20 certified to have been freely elected and wholly democratic
21 in nature.

22 (c) SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the
23 Congress that any assistance prohibited by reason of the
24 application of subsection (a) should be redirected to assist-

1 ance for humanitarian, democracy building, human rights
2 and educational efforts in Lebanon.

3 (d) **MILITARY ASSISTANCE.**—In this section, the
4 term “military assistance”—

5 (1) means any assistance under part II of the
6 Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2301 et
7 seq.) and any assistance under the Arms Export
8 Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.); and

9 (2) includes any other form of military coopera-
10 tion with the Government of Lebanon.

11 **SEC. 8. REQUIREMENT TO OPPOSE LOANS AND OTHER AS-**
12 **SISTANCE TO SYRIA AND LEBANON BY INTER-**
13 **NATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.**

14 (a) **REQUIREMENT.**—Beginning 15 days after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall in-
16 struct the United States representative to each inter-
17 national financial institution (including the International
18 Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Recon-
19 struction and Development) to which the United States
20 is a member to use the voice and vote of the United States
21 to oppose the initiation or renewal of any loan or other
22 form of assistance for Syria or Lebanon.

23 (b) **EXCEPTION.**—Subsection (a) shall not apply—

24 (1) with respect to Lebanon beginning 30 days
25 after the President certifies to the Congress that

1 Syrian military, security, and intelligence forces and
2 their proxies in Lebanon have been completely with-
3 drawn from Lebanon and that the Government of
4 Lebanon is certified to have been freely elected and
5 wholly democratic in nature; and

6 (2) with respect to Syria beginning 30 days
7 after the President certifies to the Congress that the
8 requirements described in paragraph (1) have been
9 met and that the Government of Syria is certified to
10 have been freely elected and wholly democratic in
11 nature.

12 **SEC. 9. ANNUAL REPORTS.**

13 As part of the annual human rights report required
14 under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assist-
15 ance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) and 2304(b)), the
16 Secretary of State shall pay special attention to the report
17 on Lebanon and shall include in such report the following:

18 (1) A detailed assessment of Syrian influence in
19 the three branches of the Government of Lebanon.

20 (2) An assessment of human rights abuses at-
21 tributable to Syrian influence in the Government of
22 Lebanon.

23 (3) An assessment of the role played by Syrian
24 intelligence services in Lebanon.

1 (4) An estimate of the number of Syrian mili-
2 tary, security, and intelligence forces and their prox-
3 ies and terrorist groups in Lebanon.

4 (5) Progress made by the Government of Leb-
5 anon in disarming terrorist groups, and an assess-
6 ment of the causes for the Lebanese Government's
7 failure to disarm such groups.

8 (6) The specific steps and concrete actions
9 taken by the Department of State to affect a with-
10 drawal of all Syrian military, security, and intel-
11 ligence forces and their proxies from Lebanon.

12 **SEC. 10. DEFINITION.**

13 As used in this Act, the term "Syrian military, secu-
14 rity, and intelligence forces and their proxies" includes
15 Syrian Army regulars, paramilitary forces, and plain
16 clothes intelligence and security officials.